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# Civil Resistance in the East European and Soviet Revolutions

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# CIVIL RESISTANCE IN THE EAST EUROPEAN AND SOVIET REVOLUTIONS

by Adam Roberts

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## Introduction

The death knell of communist rule, which has now ended in all European countries, was sounded not by nuclear weapons, nor even for the most part by the use of military force, but by civil resistance. In the last quarter of 1989, “people power” in various forms—generally nonviolent in character—played a significant part in undermining communist regimes in several central and eastern European countries;<sup>1</sup> in 1990–91 it played a major role in the campaigns in the Baltic states to assert their independence from the Soviet Union; and in August 1991 it was a key factor in the defeat of the attempted *putsch* in the Soviet Union, thus contributing decisively to the undermining of communist power there as well.

The events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989–91 had remarkable similarities. There were crowds in the streets demonstrating, almost always with restraint, sometimes with wit and humor; nervous communist regimes which showed themselves incapable of rallying serious public support; attempts to create transitional regimes which failed to satisfy the public’s demand for change; and, sooner or later, either an open transfer of power, or at least a public admission that there had to be an abandonment of the existing one-party system.

Constitutional guarantees of the primacy of ruling communist parties were abolished. If violence was used, it was typically by the security forces, as in Prague on November 17, 1989, at Timisoara in Romania a month later, and in the Soviet Union in August 1991: such episodes generally made things worse for their perpetrators. The whole chain of events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union could be seen as a triumph of civil resistance, validating the proposition that all government, even totalitarian government, is based on the consent and cooperation of the ruled: take that away, and the regime must collapse.

Although in most of these cases the popular action was overwhelmingly nonviolent, this was not universally so. There was violence on both sides in Romania in 1989–90; in several republics of the Soviet Union since at least 1989; and in Yugoslavia in 1991, where the much-feared specter of civil war reappeared with a vengeance. Against this somber background it is difficult to assert that there is a general trend towards nonviolent means of political struggle. What can be asserted is that nonviolent methods have a greater importance than has been allowed for in many philosophies, whether of Left or of Right.

Clearly, the changes in the communist world in 1989–91 have been something more than a simple process of political change within states: they have also transformed international relations. Reports of the end of history, and claims that there is a new world order, are premature. However, the end of the Warsaw Pact, of the Soviet empire, of Soviet totalitarianism, and indeed of the Soviet Union itself, are undeniably major events. So is the unification of Germany, achieved on October 3, 1990; and the advent of three former republics of the USSR (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) to membership in the United Nations in September 1991.

In November 1989, as the pace of change in eastern Europe was gaining momentum, Zbigniew Brzezinski was asked "Are there historical events to which you can liken this in significance?" He replied:

The only thing that comes close to it is the defeat of Nazism in World War II. That defeat was by force of arms. This defeat was by force of ideas and political resistance.<sup>2</sup>

The revolutions in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have been widely, and in all respects but one quite correctly, seen as confirming

rather than challenging the kinds of political values and systems familiar in the West. They were, unusually, revolutions in favor of an existing type of political system, rather than in favor of a future-oriented abstraction. Among other things, they were for multiparty democratic elections, which duly took place in most eastern European countries in 1990. Timothy Garton Ash has said that the east European revolutions presented us with no fundamentally new ideas, but "offered us . . . a restatement of the value of what we already have, of old truths and tested models, of the three essentials of liberal democracy and the European Community as the one and only, real existing common European home."<sup>3</sup>

Yet the view of these revolutions as a simple case of the triumph of Western over Soviet ideas is too simple. These revolutions—not so much by their ends, but rather by their means—may after all offer something worthy of more general scrutiny. As Timothy Garton Ash himself shows, they were characterized not just by a revival of the idea of civil society, but also by extensive use of civil resistance. Indeed, these events call for fundamental rethinking of many long-held ideas about how political change occurs. As Steven Lukes has written:

The theory of revolutionary change needs drastic attention in the face of the democratic revolutions of Eastern Europe: revolutions occurred without war between states or within them (apart from Rumania), without fanaticism or vanguards, undertaken in a self-limiting manner for goals that were limited and procedural rather than global and visionary. In general, the social scientists studying communist regimes should perhaps reflect on their collective failure to foresee even the possibility of most of what occurred. Perhaps that failure has something to do with their virtually total neglect of the moral dimension of political life.<sup>4</sup>

The press and public discussion in the West of these events has not included a great deal of consideration of these cases as examples of civil resistance indicating the great political potential of the technique and its significance for international relations. Two good reasons for this deserve mention.

The first reason for the low-key nature of the response to the impressive achievements of civil resistance in 1989–91 is the legacy of

so-called realist doctrines. For almost two generations now, Western thinking about politics and international relations has been deeply influenced by the realist school, with its insistence that power, including the capacity for violence, is a key factor which statesmen, and indeed academic writers in the field, neglect at their peril. This approach has been intellectually impressive and politically influential. Many governments have justified devoting huge resources to defense and deterrence by reference to one or another aspect of realist thinking. Against this background, it was always unlikely that there would be a rush to embrace civil resistance (however successful it may have been in transforming some communist societies) as the solution for all problems.

A second reason is that the picture of a pure case of civil resistance leading to victory over totalitarian regimes is too simple. It ignores the circumstances in which these revolutions happened, the complexity of events as they unfolded, and in particular the subtle connections between factors of power (including military power) on the one hand, and the achievements of civil resistance on the other.

The evidence is not yet all available. If 1989 was the year of revolutions, the 1990s will be a decade of revelations about the whole period of communist rule in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. These revelations will certainly throw light on the precise chain of events, internal and international, that led to the loss of confidence of the communist élites and the subsequent collapse of communist power.

Three main questions can at least be asked now, even if the answers may sometimes be provisional:

1. Can the changes in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989–91 be ascribed to pressures from below, including civil resistance? Or were they mainly due to changes from above that began with Gorbachev's advent to power in 1985?
2. What were the domestic and international circumstances that enabled nonviolent struggle to take place on so wide a scale, and to be apparently effective? Why was change almost completely peaceful in some countries, and very violent in others?

3. What lessons can be learned from the events of 1989–91 about the uses of civil resistance in international politics?

## Civil Resistance

The term *civil resistance* denotes a movement that is peaceful (i.e., nonviolent) in character, and it sometimes implies that the movement's goals are *civil* in the sense of being widely shared in a society. In various forms, civil resistance is found throughout history.<sup>5</sup> Demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, and other such methods are no recent invention and have been used in many conflicts in this century. Methods that do not involve the violent infliction of physical harm, even in cases where the adversary is predisposed to use violence, have been used in many struggles: against colonialism, foreign occupations, military coups d'état, dictatorial regimes, and racial or sexual discrimination. Often the reasons for the avoidance of violence are related to the context rather than to any absolute ethical principle: they spring from a society's traditions of political action, from its experience of war and violence, or from calculations about the improbability of achieving success by violent means.

As far as academic and political discussion of its possibilities is concerned, the whole subject of civil resistance has often in the past suffered from dogmatic approaches and exaggerated claims. Sometimes so great a weight of expectation is placed on it that it is bound to disappoint. There is a need for a corrective. Whatever the lessons of the events of 1989–91, there are ample grounds for scepticism about the extent to which civil resistance can replace the factor of military force in politics and international relations.

The phenomenon of armed force on the one hand, and that of nonviolent action on the other, are often presented as being, not merely distinct from each other, but opposites. At times, however, the relationship between them can be complex. Leaders of nonviolent movements sometimes favor certain threats or uses of force, even while they insist on nonviolent discipline in a particular struggle. Sometimes they may rely for support or communications on a foreign state that is able to assist because it is well defended militarily. Sometimes they may consciously use the argument that if the adversary does not respond to peaceful pressure, mayhem may ensue. Some-

times it is the very fact that there is so much capacity for violence in the world which provides, paradoxically, the best justification for resorting to nonviolent methods. Indeed, in an age of deterrence, including nuclear deterrence, civil resistance may have a natural and logical place. The revolutions in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989–91 confirm the complexities of the connections between violence and nonviolence.

### **Incidence of Civil Resistance in the 1980s**

Has the incidence and even the success of civil resistance increased in recent years? Apart from the eastern European and Soviet cases, the evidence is mixed and inconclusive.

In the Philippines in February 1986 there was an impressive demonstration of “people power.” This began after Ferdinand Marcos was declared winner of the presidential elections on February 15, in circumstances that cast considerable doubt on his victory. After popular demonstrations and numerous expressions of international concern, the opposition candidate Corazon Aquino was sworn in as president on February 25. This was rightly hailed as a remarkable example of people power. However, the change of regime was assisted by certain military factors: Mrs. Aquino carefully cultivated links with military units, and enjoyed a substantial degree of support from the U.S. government. In the years after the revolution, her government survived various attempted coups d’état owing partly to the willingness of some military units to protect it.

In the Israeli-occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza there were some elements of civil resistance in the *intifadah*, which began on December 9, 1987. However, this was very far from being a typical or “pure” case of civil resistance. The *intifadah* was characterized by violent acts such as stone-throwing and the killing of those dubbed “collaborators.” More importantly, the deeply encrusted bitterness of the underlying dispute meant that violence could never be far from the surface. It was impossible to wish away the legacy of terrorism and the strong fears on each side that the other had ultimate designs to uproot and remove a whole people: the position taken by the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 only reinforced such problems.



The *intifadah* helped to keep the issue of the Israeli-occupied territories on the international agenda, but it did not end the occupation.

During the late 1980s there were many setbacks for civil resistance. These included Burma, where the prodemocracy movement was crushed in 1988 and was not able to stage a major recovery even after the National League for Democracy won a majority of the national assembly seats in the May 27, 1990 general election; the movement continues to face enormous obstacles. In China, the Tiananmen Square massacre June 3–4, 1989 became a symbol of brutal suppression by the gun of unarmed demonstrators relying on methods of civil resistance. In Panama, an opposition movement using civil resistance failed to unseat General Noriega, who had held on to power despite his decisive defeat in the May 1989 elections;<sup>6</sup> instead he was removed following the U.S. invasion in December 1989. Thus the background against which the revolutions in eastern Europe occurred was not one which suggested that this technique was generally applicable or had any certainty of quick success.

### **Impact of the Changes in the Soviet Union upon Eastern Europe**

The changes in the Soviet Union following Mikhail Gorbachev's accession to the leadership of the Communist party in 1985 provided the essential precondition for the subsequent upheaval in eastern Europe. These changes led both to a questioning of numerous aspects of communist rule, and to a growing sense that the Soviet Union might not intervene to defend unpopular socialist regimes by force of arms. Can one go further, and say that there was a widespread belief that eastern Europe had some kind of immunity from military intervention? Or that such a belief was a necessary precondition for the emergence of widespread civil resistance? Or even that events were in some sense planned by Gorbachev and his colleagues?

Already by the summer of 1989 Gorbachev appeared to have abandoned some aspects of the "Brezhnev doctrine," which had sought to justify military intervention in a country when the leading role of the Communist party was felt to be threatened. However, this abandonment had not been sudden, had been forced upon him partly by the pace of events in eastern Europe, and was in several respects incomplete. In its early incarnations, his idea of a "common European

home" was still based on the old Soviet idea, not of the complete freedom of action of each state, but rather of peaceful coexistence of communist and western states. The long-standing ambiguity in Soviet policy between subscription to the principle of noninterference on the one hand, and maintenance of an imposed order in eastern Europe on the other, continued long into the Gorbachev era: indeed, right up to 1989.

The idea that the achievements of socialism in eastern Europe could not be reversed is found in many authoritative Soviet statements in the Gorbachev era. Thus the communiqué of the 1986 Budapest meeting of the Warsaw Pact states said: "Calls for a revision of the borders between European countries and for a change of their socio-political systems contradict the building of trust, the strengthening of mutual understanding and goodneighbourly relations in Europe."<sup>7</sup>

In his book *Perestroika*, first published in 1987, Gorbachev did make a number of statements implying an abandonment of the right of intervention in eastern European countries. For example:

The time is ripe for abandoning views on foreign policy which are influenced by an imperial standpoint. Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States is able to force its will on others. It is possible to suppress, compel, bribe, break or blast, but only for a certain period.<sup>8</sup>

Gorbachev also appeared to accept that there had to be radical change in the socialist countries:

Revolutionary changes are becoming part and parcel of the vast socialist world. They are gaining momentum. This applies to the socialist countries, but it is also a contribution to the progress of world civilization.<sup>9</sup>

Yet there was much in Gorbachev's book that seemed to be consistent with the Brezhnev doctrine, or at least with the idea that the gains of socialism in eastern Europe were permanent:

The concept of a 'common European home' suggests above all a degree of integrity, even if its states belong to

different social systems and opposing military-political alliances.<sup>10</sup>

The change from such formulae to new ones that seemed to accept greater possibilities of change in eastern Europe, or that seemed to rule out Soviet intervention to preserve socialism, was uneven. For example, Gorbachev's public remarks on his visit to Prague on April 10, 1987, were quite largely cast in a traditional mold.<sup>11</sup> In late 1987, at the Moscow celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, while "the Brezhnev doctrine was not officially repudiated, Gorbachev intimated that it would not be applied to inhibit gradual changes in Eastern Europe . . . the effect was to encourage those East Europeans who were pressing for changes considerably ahead of the pace of the Soviet restructuring."<sup>12</sup>

On July 6, 1989, addressing the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, Gorbachev continued to convey apparently conflicting messages about the future of eastern Europe:

But the difficulty most probably lies in something else: in the extremely widespread conviction and even political goal, when by overcoming the division of Europe one has in mind the overcoming of socialism. But that is a course towards confrontation, if not something worse. There will be no European unity at all with such approaches. The affiliation of the states of Europe to different social systems is a reality, and the recognition of that historical state of affairs, respect for the sovereign right of every people to choose a social system as it sees fit, is a vital prerequisite for the normal European process. The social and political orders of one country or another changed in the past and may change in the future as well. However, that is exclusively the affair of the peoples themselves, a matter for their choice. Any interference in internal affairs, any attempts to limit the sovereignty of states, both of friends and allies, no matter whose it is, is impermissible.<sup>13</sup>

Although these statements seemed at variance with the Brezhnev doctrine, there was still room for doubt as to whether in an actual crisis the Soviet Union would act in accordance with its past practice or its recent words; and whether policy would be made by Gorbachev

or by others. As one leading member of Solidarity in Poland was later to put it, by autumn 1989 the Brezhnev doctrine might have been buried by Shevardnadze and others, but it was not yet proved to be dead.<sup>14</sup>

It was only when the eastern European revolutions were already well under way that the Brezhnev doctrine seemed to be clearly renounced. On U.S. television on October 25, Mr. Gennady Gerasimov, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said: "We now have the Frank Sinatra doctrine: He had a song, 'I Had It My Way.' So every country decides on its own which road to take."<sup>15</sup> This statement attracted widespread attention and was taken as a sign that the Soviet Union would not intervene by force to prevent the changes then going on in eastern Europe. On October 26–27, the meeting of Warsaw Treaty foreign ministers in Warsaw recognized the absolute right of each state to determine its own sociopolitical development. Then on December 4, 1989, leaders of the five Warsaw Pact states that had invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, meeting in Moscow (at the first major Pact meeting when noncommunists participated on an equal footing with communists) said that "the bringing of troops of their countries into Czechoslovakia in 1968 was an interference in internal affairs of sovereign Czechoslovakia and should be condemned." This final burial of the Brezhnev doctrine without military honors was a consequence rather than a cause of the revolutions of 1989; but the earlier dilutions of the doctrine had without doubt contributed to those revolutions.

One factor probably contributing to the erosion of the Brezhnev doctrine was Afghanistan. The nine-year Soviet military involvement there had ended in February 1989, after some 13,000 Soviet troops lost their lives in an unrewarding and unending counterinsurgency war. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said on October 23, 1989, that the deployment of Soviet troops in Afghanistan in December 1979 "went against general human values . . . We committed the most serious violations of our own legislations, our party and civilian norms."<sup>16</sup> The bitter experience of Afghanistan made the Soviet leadership deeply reluctant to intervene elsewhere. The civil resisters of eastern Europe may thus in part have been the beneficiaries of the hardened *mujahedeen* guerrillas of Afghanistan.

It was not just through the erosion of the Brezhnev doctrine that the Soviet Union assisted the process of change in eastern Europe. The whole process of questioning so many aspects of socialism, and of

Stalin's and Brezhnev's legacies, was bound to have a strong secondary effect in those countries on which the Soviet Union had imposed socialist-type systems. This was especially so in countries whose regimes had been loudest in proclaiming their absolute loyalty to the Soviet Union: East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria being notable examples.

Another important factor in the process of change in eastern Europe was the Soviet Union's espousal, at least in words, of a defensive military doctrine. The formal enunciation of this doctrine began with the Warsaw Pact summit in Budapest in June 1986.<sup>17</sup> Although this and subsequent enunciations lacked conceptual and operational precision, they did place a premium on armed forces that were manifestly defensive, not just in their overall purpose, but also in their force structures, deployments, and strategies. This doctrine, as developed by some Soviet writers, put a relatively low premium on the maintenance of huge Soviet forces in eastern Europe, and indeed provided one rationale for their announced partial withdrawal. This same doctrine also provided one basis for at least one eastern European regime, namely in Hungary, to move towards more open borders.

Naturally, against this background, some have seen the changes in the USSR, and Gorbachev's policies, as having themselves created the changes in eastern Europe. As Sergei Karaganov, the deputy director of the Institute of Europe of the USSR Academy of Sciences, has written:

The events which took place in Eastern Europe in the last months of 1989 were in many respects the crowning success of the recent Soviet European policy . . .

Looking from Moscow, one could feel that all these positive developments have happened largely (although not exclusively) because of the changes in Soviet thinking and policy.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said at the CPSU Congress in July 1990:

Did we, the diplomats, the ministers and the top political leadership, know what was going to happen in eastern Europe? I have never answered this question, but now I shall

answer it. Yes, we foresaw everything, we felt everything. We felt that unless serious changes were made, tragic events would follow.<sup>19</sup>

There is obviously much truth in these claims. It is hard to imagine that the changes in eastern Europe could have happened against any other background than that of massive change in Soviet policy, both internally and externally. On the other hand, the suggestion that the changes were a part of policy, that they reflected a conscious decision, needs to be examined carefully. In the confused conditions of the Soviet Union in 1989, Gorbachev was riding an avalanche and trying all the time to look as if he was controlling it. It is doubtful whether he, or his senior colleagues, can really claim so much responsibility for a series of events that had many causes. Inasmuch as the Soviet regime did make plans for change in eastern Europe in 1989, the evidence suggests that they were plans for controlled change to communist reformers such as Egon Krenz in East Germany or Petar Mladenov in Bulgaria, rather than fundamental change to multiparty systems.

An interesting explanation of the influence of change in the Soviet Union on the revolutions in eastern Europe is offered by Ernst Kux:

Gorbachev's *perestroyka* first inspired and then accelerated the developments in Eastern Europe. Ultimately, however, it was the *failure* of *perestroyka* as a "revolution from above" in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union that brought on the "revolution from below" in Poland, Hungary, Leipzig, Prague, Sofia, and Bucharest.<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the intentions of the Soviet leaders towards eastern Europe may in fact have been, to outsiders it was far from clear in the summer of 1989 that the Soviet Union was ready to see communist control disappear. Certainly in the months and years before autumn 1989 it was not self-evident that the Gorbachev revolution meant that there could or would be a decisive break with Communist party rule either in the Soviet Union or in eastern Europe. Some in the West, and perhaps in the East too, were still influenced by arguments that communist totalitarian systems were unchangeable, or at least not likely to change.<sup>21</sup> Even those who correctly perceived that the changes in Moscow were very profound still had grounds for doubt about how

far they would affect eastern Europe: it is notorious that periods of reforming change in Moscow can presage tragedy in eastern Europe—as had been dramatically demonstrated in 1953 and 1956. Moreover, despite all the political reforms he had introduced, Gorbachev apparently remained an advocate of single-party rule even as late as November 1989.<sup>22</sup>

Very few academic and diplomatic specialists on eastern Europe can take credit for having foreseen that the admittedly weak socialist systems there would actually collapse so easily and quickly, with so little bloodshed. Richard Davy, an experienced commentator in East-West relations in Europe, did suggest very tentatively as early as 1980 that the Soviet Union under new leadership might do a balance sheet of the costs and benefits of running eastern Europe, and might seek a safe way of shedding the whole investment.<sup>23</sup> This, however, was a lone voice.

Well into the Gorbachev era, there remained substantial doubt about how far change might go in eastern Europe. William H. Luers, writing in *Foreign Affairs* in 1987, suggested that Gorbachev was set on keeping control of eastern Europe; that there was no prospect of fundamental change in the relations between the Soviet Union and any Warsaw Pact member; and that the active opposition groups in eastern Europe would not achieve power.<sup>24</sup>

Such cautious views were informed by an abiding sense that the Soviet Union was deeply attached to a security system in eastern Europe which had been created out of the catastrophe of the Second World War, and which had seemingly provided a greater degree of stability for the USSR than previous or alternative systems could have done. As Tony Judt put it, in a paper evidently written in 1989:

That the Soviet Union would oppose any undoing of Yalta is obvious. An opening up of the map of Europe for diplomatic reconsideration would raise too many ghosts. Accordingly, it seems fair to expect the present dispensation to remain in place, nibbled away only at the margins, and in no case in the name of some reestablished Central European independence.<sup>25</sup>

Those who did see possibilities of change in eastern Europe were in many cases still cautious and nuanced in their conclusions. Charles

Gati was right to point out in 1987 that Gorbachev had only been general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for a few years, and was far from certain to stay in power; whereas the leaders of the eastern European communist states had, at the time he was writing, held power for an impressive average of 24 years.<sup>26</sup> Gati was one of many observers who put more emphasis on reformist prospects in Poland and Hungary than on the possibility of mass resistance in the more orthodox countries of eastern Europe.<sup>27</sup> This was not wrong: events in eastern Europe in 1989 did begin with reform in Poland and Hungary, even though they were to continue with much more active popular participation in civil resistance than had been foreseen.

## Poland

An examination of the course of events in individual countries of eastern Europe must start with Poland. Along with Hungary, Poland blazed the trail for multiparty democracy in eastern Europe, helping to provide the conditions in which people in other countries could actually believe that change was possible. Poland became the first eastern European country to move decisively towards noncommunist government when, on June 4, 1989, Solidarity candidates decisively beat communist candidates in elections for the *Sejm* (parliament); on August 24, 1989, the National Assembly elected as prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki of Solidarity; and on September 12 it endorsed his proposals for a new coalition Council of Ministers dominated by Solidarity.

This change in Poland was in part the result of pressure from below in the form of popular resistance. Over a period of more than twenty years, the civil resistance of Poles, and especially of Polish workers, had contributed significantly to the evolution in the thinking of the party leadership. In this process, the strike weapon had been paramount.<sup>28</sup> The strikes in the Baltic ports in the winter of 1970–71 had shown the capacity of such action even in the face of brutal repression; and many subsequent strikes and demonstrations in the next two decades had added to the party's malaise, while also providing the pretext for the desperate move in December 1981 of the imposition of martial law.



In the course of the evolution of events in Poland in the 1980s, civil resistance had to be used with considerable care. Solidarity showed its power as much by its ability to restrain its followers as by its ability to unleash them. In December 1988, at a time of crucial deliberations on the future of Poland, one senior party figure, Mieczyslaw Rakowski, said publicly that Lech Walesa was "a different man from 1981" (the period of Solidarity's confrontation with the authorities leading to the imposition of martial law): Walesa was now said to favor gradual change and compromise with the ruling Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP).<sup>29</sup>

The change in Poland was also the result of evolutionary changes within party and government organs. It occurred because the communist system of government was morally and politically bankrupt and had slowly come to recognize that fact.

The proposals for political pluralism, originally articulated by Solidarity, were adopted by the Central Committee of the PUWP on January 17–18, 1989. The senior Politburo member and principal party ideologist, Marian Orzechowski, produced an initiative on political and trade union pluralism. After a tense and difficult debate (in which the leaders threatened to resign), this was accepted, providing the necessary basis for the elections in June and the formation of a mainly noncommunist government in August–September 1989.

Rakowski, who as prime minister of Poland in 1988–89 played a key part in the decision to hold elections and in the eventual setting up of a coalition government in August 1989, was later asked how he had felt the day after he handed over power and thus ushered in the post-communist age. He replied:

... for me it was at this time very clear that the kind of Communist movement which was growing up in the 20s and had propounded the concept of socialism in the following decades had no future, and that there was no way other than just to accept the results of this election. And, moreover, to accept the historical fact that the Communist parties in Europe had ceased to be a politically influential force in society, and that the only task now was to make place for a New left

...<sup>30</sup>

It is evident that internal factors, however important, were not the

only ones contributing to the Polish outcome of a noncommunist government. The changes in the Soviet Union played a crucial part, not least in increasing the willingness of the PUWP regime to search for compromise solutions with its Solidarity adversaries. Also, some actions of Western powers, especially in the early 1980s, may deserve some credit. The Reagan policy of sanctions, introduced after the 1981 imposition of martial law, had some effect. These were limited sanctions, for limited objectives: the ending of emergency laws, the freeing of political prisoners, and the resumption of government dialogue with Solidarity. As these objectives were achieved, the sanctions were progressively lifted.

Thus, so far as the part played by civil resistance in achieving the end of communist rule, Poland presents a complex picture. Civil resistance was a crucial catalyst for change in several key episodes over at least two decades. However, the changes to which it contributed hardly followed a simple linear progression towards democracy. The imposition of martial law in 1981 was a direct response to pressure from Solidarity, and it may have been necessary to prevent a threatened Soviet invasion of Poland.<sup>31</sup> Thereafter, the slow evolution of ideas among those in power was as important as the overt resistance they faced; but that slow evolution was deeply influenced by the extent, the discipline, and the effective leadership, of the opposition forces.

## Hungary

Hungary too had a pioneering role in creating preconditions for change in other countries in eastern Europe. It did so partly by pointing the way towards a pluralistic economic and political system within Hungary itself, and partly by influencing the dramatic events in East Germany decisively by permitting the passage of emigrants from East Germany to Austria. The changes in Hungary were characterized, even more than in Poland, by an early and gradual evolution of ideas, including within the party. This evolution was powerfully influenced by memories of the Hungarian revolution of 1956, and by a strong awareness of the need to reform the economic system if the country was to be competitive internationally. Although there were many important strikes and demonstrations, there was no dramatic

confrontation or sudden transfer of power of the kind that happened in other countries in 1989.

This significance of Hungary, as a country that could point the way to major change by evolutionary means, was already foreseen in outline as far back as 1969. On the very day—April 18, 1969—when, eight months after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Alexander Dubcek's dismissal from the post of first secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party had been announced on its front page, the Czechoslovak party daily *Rudé Právo* carried an editorial that was a last cry of disappointed reformists who had tried to oppose an occupation by peaceful means. Praising the economic reforms in Hungary, the article was also a symbolic way of passing on the torch to a different and more evolutionary approach to change in eastern Europe:

Of all the socialist states which have, to varying degrees, proceeded to economic reforms, Hungary is showing the most remarkable course. The prudent measures and some of the solutions adopted have aroused attention and interest . . . The reform of the political mechanism in Hungary is still a topical problem the solution of which can possibly be deferred but cannot be avoided if the reforms are not to be given up as a whole . . . We wish our Hungarian friends further successful progress . . . Their success can be an indirect help to us.<sup>32</sup>

By 1988 the evolution in Hungary had reached a point—which was no surprise to those who had followed events there in the preceding years—where genuine political and economic pluralism was increasingly identified as the goal. In July 1988 Prime Minister Karoly Grosz, during a visit to the United States, said that he could “envisage any sort of a system” in Hungary, including a multiparty system.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, in acceptance of multiparty democracy (though not in the holding of actual elections), Hungary was significantly ahead of Poland. In September 1988 the Hungarian Democratic Forum was launched. On November 13 a coalition of opposition groups issued a call for democratic elections.<sup>34</sup> On January 11, 1989, the Hungarian parliament passed a law enabling citizens to establish independent associations. Justice Minister Kalman Kulcsár said at the time:

The modernization of Hungarian society cannot develop in the framework of an authoritarian political system. Society in many respects has outgrown the conditions of the last four decades.<sup>35</sup>

In June various new political parties were set up, and on June 21, 1989, Imre Poszgay, the reformist leader of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, said that the party accepted the principle of a democratic electoral political system based on free elections and contested by rival political parties. On September 18 a complex series of talks between the party and opposition organizations resulted, after a marathon total of 238 sessions, in a compromise agreement that provided for new presidential elections, a new constitution, and new electoral laws. Poszgay's role in all this is a notable example of how important a part in the process of change in eastern Europe was played by influential individuals within ruling communist parties.

At the same time, disciplined but strong popular pressure within Hungary contributed greatly to change. It was manifested in many ways, including in demonstrations in June 1988 (violently dispersed by the police) and June 1989 (assisted by the authorities) to commemorate the death of Imre Nagy in the wake of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. At the demonstration on June 16, 1989, in front of a crowd of 200,000, and shown live on national television, Viktor Orbán of the Young Democrats said prophetically:

If we can trust our souls and strength, we can put an end to the communist dictatorship; if we are determined enough we can force the Party to submit itself to free elections; and if we do not lose sight of the ideals of 1956, then we will be able to elect a government that will start immediate negotiations for the swift withdrawal of Russian troops.<sup>36</sup>

It was in fact at roughly the time of this demonstration that plans were being drawn up for moves towards pluralism and constitutional change in Hungary: plans that resulted in the announcements of June 21 and September 18, 1989. Popular pressure and institutional change seem to have had a mutually reinforcing effect.

One very significant feature of the Hungarian changes in 1989 related to the opening up of Hungary's border with Austria—a pro-

cess that had started in May 1989 when the dismantling of fences on the border began. This had huge ramifications, both because it enabled East German refugees to escape from their country via Hungary, and also because it raised hopes that the iron curtain could disappear along its entire length. What enabled the Hungarian leadership to embark on, and maintain, so bold a step?

One factor was international law, which indeed played a significant part in eastern European developments in 1989 generally. On March 17, 1989, Hungary had become the first eastern European state formally to accede to the terms of the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees, and the follow-up Protocol of 1967—an event prompted by the influx of some 13,000 ethnic Hungarian refugees from Romania. This agreement was to provide a useful buttress to Hungary in the autumn in reinforcing its resolve to permit East German refugees to transit Hungarian territory and go to Austria. It provided Hungary with a good legal ground for repudiating on September 10 a secret bilateral agreement with East Germany, which had been concluded in June 1969, and which barred nationals of the other state from unauthorized travel to third states.<sup>37</sup>

The opening up of the Hungaro-Austrian frontier may also have owed something to the new doctrine of “defensive defense.” On September 8, 1989, Hungarian officials announced that Hungary would pull back all offensive weapons to 50 kilometers from its borders with Austria and Yugoslavia. It also proposed that these two neighbors reciprocate, so that there would be a 100 kilometer zone containing only military equipment and troops needed for border defense. It was also announced that Hungary would cut its military spending, halve the number of its tanks, and ask for withdrawals of certain categories of Soviet forces (including some tank battalions) from Hungary. Clearly there was an important connection between these statements and the key (and more or less simultaneous) Hungarian decision, which had such large political ramifications in eastern Europe, to open its border with Austria.

## **East Germany**

The events in East Germany, culminating in the decision to open up the Berlin Wall on Friday, November 10, 1989, constituted a much

clearer case of a very reluctant regime being forced to change, and its leaders to resign, by peaceful public pressure. Various manifestations of peaceful opposition, including election-monitoring in May, mass emigration, and demonstrations of various kinds, had been increasing throughout the summer of 1989. From May onwards, a flood of refugees to the West via Hungary had forced many close to the regime to rethink radically the utility of the Wall and many other key policies as well. In September, New Forum came into existence: a body without office, staff, or funds. Its members were not antisocialist, and largely limited themselves to a straightforward call for democratic reform. In October and early November, huge demonstrations in East Berlin, Leipzig, and other cities provided further proof that the regime had lost control of its own population, and also indicated a public mood that was more pro-Western than New Forum's leaders. The whole process was indeed a great triumph of nonviolent pressure from below.

On October 8, a march of 30,000 in Dresden (where the moderate Hans Modrow was party leader) dispersed after the authorities agreed to meet a delegation for discussions. On October 9 at least 50,000 people demonstrated in Leipzig, following the regular Monday "prayers for peace" in the Church of St. Nicholas—an event that has been called a "turning point" in the East German revolution: violence by the authorities was widely feared, and was probably only avoided thanks to a last-minute appeal, issued by well-known individuals, for nonviolence.<sup>38</sup> On October 11 the Politburo of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) accepted the need for dialogue with the population; and on October 18, Erich Honecker resigned as head of state and head of party after eighteen years in power, being succeeded by Egon Krenz, who was not known to be a reformer. This did nothing to stop the demonstrators, who under the leadership of New Forum wanted more fundamental change. On October 30 over 300,000 demonstrated in Leipzig, and on November 4 perhaps half a million demonstrated in East Berlin. As the refugee wave continued, both the government and the Politburo resigned, and on November 9 travel restrictions were lifted and the Berlin Wall was decisively breached. From then on, free elections were inevitable, leading to the meeting of East Germany's first freely elected parliament on April 5, 1990; and the unification of Germany, eventually achieved in October 1990 in much

happier circumstances than ever before in Germany's tangled history, increasingly seemed the destination towards which all signposts pointed.

Some of the circumstances that made peaceful opposition possible, and effective, should be noted. This popular pressure was undoubtedly assisted by pressure from outside. The East German regime, having for decades proclaimed eternal loyalty to the Soviet Union, was peculiarly vulnerable to change there. The visit by Gorbachev to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the German Democratic Republic on October 7 was a key catalyst. In a speech in East Berlin on October 6, Gorbachev stressed that "matters affecting the GDR are decided not in Moscow but in Berlin." Some of the demonstrators later that month shouted "Gorby, Gorby."<sup>39</sup>

Also, it was the existence of a prosperous, free, and defended country near at hand, namely West Germany, that provided not just an example for East Germans to aspire towards, but a haven to which they could flee. This route for refugees was opened up more easily thanks to the happy accident that Hungary had a common border with a neutral country, Austria, along which a section of the iron curtain had been dismantled in May with less ideological difficulty than might have been the case along a border with a NATO member country: large numbers of East German refugees travelled to West Germany by this route. In the summer and autumn, indeed, it almost began to seem as if German unification might be achieved by the one way that had not been foreseen—by the whole population moving West. In the first eight months of 1989 there were 50,000 legal emigrations to West Germany; in addition, in August, September, and early October at least 30,000 left for West Germany through Hungary, or via the West German embassies in Prague and Warsaw.<sup>40</sup>

If emigration was one effective form of peaceful protest, the discipline of the East German demonstrators was also a significant factor. By all accounts Honecker and his colleagues, who had congratulated the Chinese on the Tiananmen Square massacre only a few months before, came close to repeating it in Leipzig on October 9. That they did not do so is probably due not only to some resistance from within the regime, and from Mr. Gorbachev, but also to the fact that the protests, mostly church-led, were restrained, and demonstrators gave no pretext for violent repression.

## **Bulgaria**

The changes in Bulgaria also reached a climax on November 10, 1989, when the 78-year-old Todor Zhivkov, who had been first secretary of the party since 1954, was ousted. His successor, and the principal engineer of his removal, was Petar Mladenov, the foreign minister. Mladenov had reportedly been outraged by the renewal in May 1989 of the repression of Bulgaria's Turkish minority. In late October he had allegedly stopped off in Moscow while en route to China and secured backing from the Soviet leadership for a challenge to Zhivkov. On November 3 about 4,000 people had taken part in a brief prodemocracy demonstration outside the National Assembly building. The events in Bulgaria had partly the character of a "palace coup," in which popular participation was much less than in the other countries of eastern Europe: but it was a coup whose timing and direction was decisively influenced by the domino effect of events elsewhere, and by the strong sense in Bulgaria that it is a country whose fate is inextricably linked with that of the Soviet Union.

## **Czechoslovakia**

The "velvet revolution" in Czechoslovakia in November–December 1989 was a remarkable demonstration of "people power." Everything happened with extraordinary speed, beginning just over a week after the breaching of the Berlin Wall. On November 17, the anniversary of a Nazi assault on Czech students, Czech police attacked demonstrators in Prague, and it was even for a time believed that one student had been killed. On November 19 Civic Forum was formed, linking together various Czech opposition groups. Mass demonstrations and strikes followed, leading to a two-hour general strike on November 27. On December 3 President Husak swore in a new federal government, and on December 9 he announced his resignation. On December 29 Václav Havel was elected President by unanimous vote of the Federal Assembly, becoming the first noncommunist head of state since 1948.

Of course, the "velvet revolution" was not quite as sudden as this account suggests, nor was it quite as simple. The ground had been prepared for many years. Three key features of the Czechoslovak revolution merit special attention.



First, although the country had been the object of invasion by the armies of five Warsaw Pact states in 1968, there had never been any question of armed resistance. An initially strong movement of demonstrations and noncooperation in 1968 had yielded, in 1969, to a greater degree of acquiescence. Even exiles from Czechoslovakia—who in past occupations of their country had often taken up arms—did not do so in this case. Josef Svorecky commented: "From the 1988 exile wave, the martial element was totally absent. Nobody expected a war of liberation any longer. The atomic bomb became a guarantor of peace and of the survival of tyranny."<sup>41</sup>

Second, international legal standards were important. The opposition movement Charter 77 was conceived on the day—November 11, 1976—of the publication of an official ordinance confirming Czechoslovakia's ratification of the two 1966 United Nations covenants on human rights.<sup>42</sup> Over a decade later, the concluding document of the Vienna meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, issued on January 17, 1989, also had an influence.<sup>43</sup> The standards proclaimed in the Vienna document, and the statements in support of them by participants at the Vienna meeting including U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, appear to have inhibited the Czech riot police from continuing to attack demonstrators in Prague who were commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the protest suicide of Jan Palach. On January 18, some 5,000 people demonstrated without interference—a serious sign that the regime was losing control.

Third, the velvet revolution could happen because people sensed that it was safe, and that they were acting at the right time. One year earlier had not been the right time. In early 1988 Václav Havel, interviewed by a British journalist, had said: "I am not pessimistic . . . Society is waiting. If developments go in the right direction people will know very well what to do."<sup>44</sup> Later that year, former party secretary Alexander Dubcek, in his first speech in the West, said in Bologna that in Czechoslovakia "every form of dialogue is practically impossible."<sup>45</sup> These remarks highlight the importance of looking at the overall political context when attempting to evaluate the eastern European revolutions of 1989. Yet the demonstrations were not just a response to events: they were also a cause. Without the mass demonstrations, the strikes, and the evidence of growing defections from the ranks of the regime's usual supporters, it is scarcely imaginable that Communist party leaders accustomed to a monopoly of power would

have abdicated; and without the impressive nonviolent discipline of the demonstrations, it is probable that the party leadership would have found a pretext for violent repression.

There have been suggestions that what happened in Prague on the night of November 17, 1989, was more complex than appeared at the time. In May 1990 a parliamentary committee investigating the events of November 17 released its report suggesting close involvement by the Soviet KGB. The general picture that emerged was of a staged police "outrage" on November 17, in which the police used brutal violence and spread rumors of the death of a demonstrator—all with the aim of creating conditions in which the existing leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party would be forced to make way for a more durable replacement.<sup>46</sup> There have also been various suggestions as to the identity of the Soviet Union's favored candidate for the leadership of party and country: including the name of Zdenek Mlynar, a former Politburo colleague of Dubcek (and fellow student with Gorbachev) who had been living in the West. Whatever the truth of such reports, the leadership of Civic Forum, and the mass demonstrations throughout the country, ensured that what may have been planned as a palace coup from above ended as a genuine revolution from below.

## Romania

The revolution, if such it was, in Romania in December 1989 presents the most tangled picture of all, and the one on which judgements should be most cautious. It is a classic illustration of the complexity of the situations in which nonviolent action operates. The changes in Romania were apparently triggered by the peaceful protest at Timisoara on December 19 against the government's efforts to exile an ethnic Hungarian protestant pastor: this protest was brutally suppressed in a slaughter that was believed at the time to number thousands.<sup>47</sup> Many observers thought this slaughter would stop the protests.<sup>48</sup> Yet it did not do so. For a few days, this seemed to be a classic case of nonviolent action facing up to and openly challenging violent repression.

In Bucharest two days later, in a situation that plainly could have become a bloodbath, crowds shouting "Down with Ceausescu!"

caused the Romanian dictator to panic, visibly, and in sight of the television cameras. The crowd then openly challenged army tanks sent in to restore order. The next day, December 22, it was apparent that the army was changing sides. The crowd was, understandably, delighted to have the army as an ally, and the shout went up "The army is with us!" In the ensuing days the people who had been demonstrating were pleased to have the army with them when it came to dealing with desperate and ruthless sharpshooters, who were reportedly from Ceausescu's hated *Securitate* forces. There was no doctrinal or ideological objection to the use of armed force once it was perceived to be in a just cause. The problem being faced—murderous sharp-shooting by desperate individuals—was one with which civil resistance was ill-equipped to cope. The killing of the Ceausescus on December 25, 1989, was the only occasion in the eastern European revolutions when former leaders were summarily tried and executed.<sup>49</sup>

The Romanian revolution's reliance on allies in the army and in the newly-formed National Salvation Front left a lasting and well-founded legacy of concern. It was concern, firstly, that the open use of violence by both sides in December 1989 and January 1990 had contributed to a mood of bitterness and willingness to resort to violence, which would continue to haunt Romanian politics; secondly, that the transfer away from communist power was much less complete than in other eastern European countries; and thirdly, that the transition had failed to get beyond that stage of planned liberalization which might have been planned with Moscow's consent.

A major controversy about the authenticity of the Romanian revolution broke out in 1990 and has not subsided. A main focus of the controversy was an interview with the former communist dissident Silviu Brucan and the former defense minister Nicolae Militaru, published in *Adevarul* (Truth), the main official newspaper in Bucharest, in August 1990. Both of them had been prominent in the National Salvation Front when it seized power in December 1989, but were later sidelined by President Iliescu, whom they said had shown no interest in actually changing the communist political system. They said they had participated in a coup plot, prepared long in advance, that sealed Ceausescu's fate. It involved army units, many generals, and a section of Ceausescu's *Securitate* secret police. They said it was untrue that the army, as popularly believed, had suddenly taken the side of the

people in a revolution. This version of events challenged that which had been put out by the National Salvation Front, which claimed to have led a popular revolution that had started in Timisoara.<sup>50</sup>

Whatever the truth of the various claims and counterclaims, it seems clear from the record that President Ceausescu fatally lost his nerve when confronted on December 21 by an unarmed but rebellious crowd; and that some of the violence of the events in Romania in subsequent days can be attributed to the fact that the Ceausescu regime, being more nationalistic and independent of the Soviet Union than most others in eastern Europe were at the time, could not be restrained from using extreme violence by Moscow to anything like the same degree as the regimes in East Germany or Czechoslovakia.

### **The Baltic States**

In September 1991 the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were admitted to membership in the United Nations. For the first time since their formal incorporation into the Soviet Union in August 1940, they were accepted as independent states—even by the authorities in Moscow. This change was achieved through an interesting mixture of slow institutional change, popular civil resistance, and some reliance on military units. The fact that these republics had only been communist for fifty years helped them, as it helped others in eastern Europe, to move back towards older forms of social, political, and economic organization. On the other hand, these republics had faced many difficulties in their path to independence, including some assaults by the Soviet military, and fears of more. In addition, in all three Baltic republics there was a problem of minorities (especially the Russians in Latvia) who were nervous about the consequences of independence.

There had been many stirrings of opinion in the Baltic republics in preceding decades—especially following the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. From early in the Gorbachev era, there were growing signs of national self-assertion. In 1988, in each of the three republics, an old guard party chief was kicked out, the use of the national flag was legalized, and crucial moves were taken towards genuine multiparty democracy. Even before the dramatic events in eastern Europe in the last months of 1989, a new relationship between the republics and Moscow was emerging, with much increased scope for economic and

political autonomy. A conspicuous proof of the growth of a more vocal public opinion was the Baltic Chain, organized by the three popular fronts in the three Baltic republics on August 23, 1989: between one and two million people peacefully joined hands and called for "the peaceful restoration of our statehood."<sup>51</sup> On the same day the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party passed a threatening resolution "On the situation in the Republics of the Soviet Baltic":

Things have gone far. A serious danger threatens the fate of the Baltic nations. People must know toward what kind of abyss nationalist leaders are pushing them. If they succeed in achieving their goals, the consequences could be catastrophic for their peoples. Their very viability could be called into question.<sup>52</sup>

Despite this and other threats, in September 1989 the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet declared the 1940 annexation by the USSR illegal; and a similar declaration was made by the Estonian Supreme Soviet in November.<sup>53</sup> As the revolutions of 1989 progressed in eastern Europe, they inevitably found reflections in the Baltic republics—including within the Communist party there. Thus for example on November 16, 1989, Lithuanian communists, in talks in Moscow, persisted in their stated intention to form their own party.<sup>54</sup>

Decisive steps regarding independence came in 1990. On March 11 the Lithuanian authorities declared independence: the first Baltic republic to do so. Thus they overtook Estonia, which up to then had been ahead in most other moves towards national self-assertion. On March 30, 1990, Estonia made initial moves towards an independence resolution, but did not actually declare independence. At the time, Gorbachev was set on reversing these moves, especially Lithuania's declaration. Ultimatums were sent, troops were deployed, and tanks rolled on the streets of Vilnius.<sup>55</sup> Foreign governments, especially that of the United States, warned the Soviet Union against a clamp-down on Lithuania.<sup>56</sup> There was no certainty that the Soviet Union would not use major force against these internal defections, which raised very acute problems for the Soviet leaders, especially because of their effects in other republics. Change, at least in the form of a reassertion of statehood, looked as if it might be a great deal harder to achieve within the USSR in 1990 and 1991 than it was in eastern Europe in 1989.

Especially in the months after March 1990, there were numerous incidents in all the Baltic republics of the threat, or use, of armed force to prevent independence. In Lithuania, 15 civilians were killed on January 13, 1991, when Soviet troops smashed into the TV center. After this outrage, responsibility for which was unclear, Russian President Boris Yeltsin visited Vilnius and called on Soviet troops to disobey illegal orders. Within the Baltic republics, the response to such assaults was a mixture of constitutionalism, peaceful propaganda, appeal to the international community, preparedness to negotiate, civil resistance, local desertions from the Red Army, and organization of armed force through locally raised units.

How central was civil resistance in the achievement of change in the Baltic republics? The campaigns there were overwhelmingly peaceful, legal, and political in character. As such, they managed to minimize, though not wholly prevent, the antagonizing of the national minorities on their soil. In many ways the pattern was similar to that in the eastern European countries, but there was one substantial difference: in the Baltic republics there was, naturally, a much stronger sense of external threat, including a well-founded fear that Soviet military units (either those already stationed there or new ones from outside) would intervene massively. Lithuania, which faced such threats most directly, partly because by March 1990 it had put itself at the forefront of the independence drive, was also the subject of a three-month economic blockade in 1990. As one part of its response to the threats, the Lithuanian authorities developed a policy that was a remarkable combination of civil resistance and other forms of action. On February 28, 1991, the Supreme Council adopted a resolution that said in part:

Given that the USSR is continuing to implement aggressive actions directed against the Republic of Lithuania and that the possibility of active occupation remains, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania . . . resolves:

1. To consider illegal all governing structures created in Lithuania by the USSR or its collaborators, and invalid all laws, decrees or other acts, court decisions and administrative orders issued by them and directed at Lithuania.
2. All government institutions of the Republic of Lithuania

and their officials are obligated not to cooperate with the occupying forces and the individuals who serve their regime.

3. In the event a regime of active occupation is introduced, citizens of the Republic of Lithuania are asked to adhere to principles of disobedience, non-violent resistance, and political and social non-cooperation as the primary means of struggle for independence.
4. Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania have the right by all available methods and means to defend themselves, others and the property of Lithuania from violent and other actions of the illegal occupying regime. . . .<sup>57</sup>

This resolution is an interesting example of how reliance on non-violent methods assumed a form that did not apparently renounce all possible uses of violence. Note the reference to nonviolent methods being the *primary* means of struggle, and the careful maintenance of the right to use *all available methods*. In mid-1990, indeed, the Lithuanian government began the formation of an armed national militia, which was assigned such tasks as defending government buildings.

The struggle for the independence of the Baltic states was pursued very skillfully, largely by political means and peaceful struggle, taking advantage of the divisions and doubts within the Soviet Union that made any attempt at full reassertion of Soviet control unlikely. Diplomatic support of powerful countries, including the United States, was sought and obtained. Eventually, it was the failure of the August 19, 1991 coup in Moscow that gave the green light to Baltic independence. It was on August 20 that Estonia finally declared its full independence, and on August 21 that Latvia did so. Thus from the first to the last, the struggle in the Baltic states for independence had been part of a larger struggle for the transformation of the Soviet Union.

### The Failed Soviet Coup

On Monday, August 19, 1991, a coup d'état was carried out in the Soviet Union of a kind that had been feared at many stages in the

period of Gorbachev's rule. While Gorbachev was held in isolation in his summer retreat in the Crimea, an eight-man State Emergency Committee headed by Soviet Vice-President Gennady Yanayev seized power. The proclamation issued by the coup leaders was more an appeal for order than for a return to full-blooded socialism; and the actions of the coup leaders, perhaps hamstrung by institutional resistance, appeared to lack decisiveness.

Opposition began almost immediately. The coup leaders failed to arrest Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who already on Monday called for a general strike, and himself took a leading part in opposing the coup, encouraging citizens to come to defend the Russian Federation parliament building. The general strike did not materialize; the Communist party acquiesced in the seizure of power; and there was little overt military counter-pressure. Yet a powerful movement against the coup emerged very rapidly. There was unrest and disobedience among the public and within some branches of the government and armed forces. On August 20, resistance became widespread. In Leningrad, 100,000 people filled the square outside the Winter Palace. In Moscow, when tanks crunched into the barricades around the parliament building, three demonstrators were killed. In many of the republics, the leadership came out against the coup—the Ukraine doing so on August 20 after hesitating for 24 hours. President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan declared the actions of the emergency committee illegal. The Estonian and Latvian parliaments declared the independence of their countries on August 20 and 21, and in Riga, the Latvian capital, several were injured at midday on August 21 when troops used tear gas and rifle butts against crowds defending the parliament. By the evening of Wednesday, August 21 the coup had collapsed.

These events were of great historical importance. The failure of the coup d'état greatly reduced, though it could never entirely eliminate, the fear that conservative forces could turn the clock back in the Soviet Union. The supine performance of the CPSU discredited it, leading to its virtual elimination as a significant force in the country. The evidence of resistance to the coup within the KGB, the army, and other bodies confirmed the emergence of a civil society in which commitment to values and institutions came before automatic obedience to orders. The republics became bolder in their pursuit of independence, and the old Soviet Union, along with its Communist party, virtually ceased to exist.



Civil resistance played a key part in the defeat of the coup, just as it had of many other coups in this century. The appeals to the troops to disobey those who had seized power, the institutional resistance, the demonstrations and sporadic strikes—all these showed the power of noncooperation against an attempted coup. However, the resistance was by no means unambiguously nonviolent: witness the making of Molotov cocktails, the support of a few friendly tanks and army units, and the wearing of an odd assortment of military and paramilitary uniforms by the demonstrators in Moscow. On August 20 President Yeltsin issued a decree, naturally contested by the coup leaders, assuming control of all Soviet armed forces in his republic. The sense that the country was on the edge of civil war was reflected in many statements at the time, and may have contributed to the eventual collapse of the coup.

## **General Issues**

The events of 1989–91 in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union prompt reflection on a number of general issues. There can be no pretense that civil resistance alone and in splendid isolation brought about the dramatic changes. Too many people have tried to rush in to try to claim credit for events that had multiple and complex causes.

The best overall explanation of the process is probably to be found in words attributed to Napoleon: "All Empires die of indigestion." Or else in Macaulay's judgement: "The reluctant obedience of distant provinces generally costs more than it is worth."<sup>58</sup> The overall pattern of events in international relations since 1945 suggests that fission is an even more dominant pattern than fusion. The two Yemens and the two Germanies may have united in 1990, but the great European empires, the Soviet empire in Europe, and now even the Soviet internal empire, have crumbled. Even though, like all great decolonizations, these changes will lead to great instability, the Soviet empire is not likely to be widely lamented.

Much of this transformation has been due to a great sea change in political and social thinking, and not just to one technique of resistance. In particular, the bankruptcy of communism, and the notable weakness of the surviving husks of communist institutions, presented an unusual target of opportunity. Significantly, in China, where economic reforms had been more successful than elsewhere in the com-

unist world, and where there is no strong tradition of multiparty democracy, the regime could survive in a way that proved impossible elsewhere.

The great change in the climate of ideas in the 1980s included a shift toward multiparty liberal democracy. This was evident from events of the 1970s and 1980s not only in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, but also in Spain, Portugal, the Philippines, many Latin American countries, and also some African countries. Constitutional democracy, with all its limitations, is perhaps the greatest alternative to political violence as a means of settling conflicts. The revival of liberal democracy acquires deeper significance in light of the Kantian notion that war between practicing democracies is unlikely—a notion that has not yet been decisively falsified, even if it is much less than an absolute guarantee.

Yet even if it was simply one instrument in a larger process of change, civil resistance did have a central role in the great transformations of 1989–91. There is a need to analyze that role undogmatically. Can one draw any general conclusions about the place of civil resistance in international relations? A few preliminary attempts follow.

1. As in earlier decolonization struggles, civil resistance is most likely to be effective when there is internal conflict in the adversary's camp about the desirability and possibility of maintaining an existing system. If a system has lost its inner belief and external dynamism, as Soviet-style socialism had done by the late 1980s (due partly to earlier episodes of civil resistance), it makes a relatively easy target.

2. Even if the immediate adversary was considered incorrigible and brutal—as Honecker was in East Germany—it was very important to those engaging in resistance to have some sense that higher authorities (in this case, Gorbachev) were on their side.

This is similar to the U.S. civil rights movement's sense, from the Montgomery bus boycott onwards, that even if state forces were against them, federal ones were not.

3. The existence of international agreements and even of some shared values—exemplified in the 1966 UN human rights accords, the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, and the 1989 Vienna follow-up document of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe—played a part in facilitating transition, both by stressing the importance of human rights, and by helping to establish a framework of general security and confidence that made major change in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union seem thinkable.

4. The presence of free and defended countries in the West was crucial to much of the change. This was not only because these were remarkable cases of revolutions in favor of actually existing types of political systems as found in the West, but also because the firmness of Western countries in resisting eastern pressure over decades contributed to the loss of dynamism of communist systems. Furthermore, Western firmness over many crises—as for example over Poland after 1981 and Lithuania in 1990—may have helped to induce Soviet restraint in the handling of civil resistance.

President Havel of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, in his address to the NATO Council on March 21, 1991, paid tribute to the work of the alliance: "I am happy to have this opportunity to tell from this rostrum today the truth: the North Atlantic Alliance has been, and remains—pursuant to the will of democratically elected governments of its member countries—a thoroughly democratic defensive community which has made a substantial contribution to the facts that this continent has not experienced any war suffering for nearly half a century and that a great part thereof has been saved from totalitarianism."<sup>59</sup>

In the case of East Germany, the presence of a free country next door was especially crucial to the process of change. The availability of West German television in East Germany influenced attitudes over a long period; and the crisis of 1989 was precipitated by mass emigration to the West, compelling a reluctant regime to initiate change.

5. Television played a key role in the events of 1989–91. It made East Germans aware of the flight to the West, Czech and Slovaks aware of what was happening in all the neighboring countries and in their midst, and Romanians aware that Ceausescu was vulnerable: indeed, much of the Romanian revolution was conducted from the television studio in Bucharest. Yet before concluding that these were "television revolutions," it is well to remember that sudden, widespread processes of infectious political change are not unique to the late twentieth century. It was well over a century ago that Jacob Burckhardt wrote: "But when the time is ripe, the contagion spreads with electrical speed over hundreds of miles and among populations that otherwise are hardly conscious of one another. The message flies through the air and suddenly everyone is in agreement on the one thing that matters, even if it is only a vague 'Things must change!' Finally, all those who want things to be different than they were join in."<sup>60</sup>

6. There can be a “domino effect” with revolution by civil resistance, just as there can with other forms of political change. Patterns of political organization and action spread rapidly from one country to another. Even isolated Albania was not immune: mass demonstrations and emigrations contributed to dramatic change there in 1990–91.

7. All these cases of civil resistance in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union cast additional doubt on the already questionable view that civil resistance is the complete opposite of violence, or a complete and total substitute for it. Sometimes some kinds and degrees of use of force or deterrence may be necessary and even desirable, and in one way or another may contribute to the conditions in which civil resistance can take place. The actions of guerrillas in Afghanistan, and the defense preparations of NATO states, may all have helped create conditions for civil resistance in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

8. There is also a need to rethink the traditional and crude dichotomy of collaboration versus resistance. The role of people who worked within the communist system, and who were receptive to proposals for change, was as important as the role of open opponents of communism. This was most conspicuously the case in Hungary and Poland, where even the previously tame pseudo-independent political parties began to acquire a life of their own; but the significance of differing opinions and interests within the communist establishments was also clear in greater or lesser degree in all of what must now be called the post-communist countries.

9. These cases force some reflection about the time that civil resistance takes to have an effect. Although the events of late 1989 seemed to happen with stunning rapidity, they were the culmination of very long campaigns. Czechoslovak civil resistance to Soviet control was effectively crushed in 1968 and 1969, only to resurface in a minor way in the 1970s, and much more massively in 1989. In Poland, workers’ struggles against communist rule had taken place since at least 1956, and resulted in slow but significant changes in society and in the party; at times, as with the imposition of martial law in 1981, they almost seemed to be defeated. Yet in the end the organization and the methods of struggle developed by Solidarity and its forbears were crucial to change in Poland in 1989. Sometimes, after decades of slow fermentation, the effects of widespread civil resistance can be very quick: most strikingly in the mere three days that it took to defeat the August 1991 Moscow coup.

10. Why, in a particularly highly armed region of the most highly armed continent, did resistance assume a nonviolent form? There are several explanations: national traditions of resistance going back decades and even centuries; the influence of churches; ethical rejection of political violence; memories of wars and civil wars, leading to a desire not to repeat their miseries; and a sense that where arms are numerous and destructive, there are many inhibitions against their use.

In many cases, civil resistance was a reaction to the fact of the monopoly of power being in the hands of the state, and to the experience of overwhelming force. The lesson of such force, as used for example in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, coupled with the memory of Western passivity, compelled opponents of communist systems to resort to means other than violence to achieve their ends.

Social cohesion can be an important prerequisite for civil resistance, some forms of which require mass popular support to be effective. In some socialist states there was a high degree of social cohesion, even if it was founded on little more than a deep dislike of the regime. Where social cohesion was conspicuously lacking, as in most parts of Yugoslavia, resistance was less likely to assume nonviolent forms.

One additional factor contributed to the nonviolent character of the movements against communist rule. The critics of Leninist regimes rightly drew a specific lesson from the history of revolutionary violence. As Adam Michnik put it in Poland, those who start storming Bastilles end up building their own. In these countries, the idea of the violent revolutionary elite, which still has some appeal in other parts of the world, had been comprehensively discredited.

11. Why were arms not used more extensively against civil resisters? One obvious reason is that the demonstrators, thanks to their restraint, discipline, and emphasis on legality, could not easily be viewed as a security threat; so they gave no real justification for the use of counter-force.

There have been many indications that in 1989 Soviet control of the Warsaw Pact's forces may have played some part in ensuring that more force was not used against demonstrators in, for example, East Germany, and perhaps in Prague too after the initial curious episode on November 17. Many statements by Gorbachev and his colleagues, especially Eduard Shevardnadze, are consistent with the view that the existence of armaments, including nuclear armaments, can induce a certain prudence and restraint into international relations. The aware-

ness that the use of armed force can lead to unpredictable consequences—an awareness which nuclear deterrence has served to strengthen—does seem to have helped create circumstances in which civil resistance could succeed. Perhaps there is a relationship of sorts between overarching, overwhelming capacity for force on the one hand, and the possibilities for civil resistance on the other.

Where, as in China and Romania, there were Communist regimes that were not susceptible to the restraint which was evident in Moscow, there were fewer inhibitions on the use of violence, even against peaceful demonstrators. In Romania, though not in China, the use of violence was notably unsuccessful even in the short term: this suggested that “Communists still in power may face a choice between yielding power gracefully and yielding it as Ceausescu did.”<sup>61</sup>

12. The use of civil resistance cannot normally be expected, on its own, to force troop withdrawals. That is something which was achieved slowly by the new governments in eastern Europe in 1990–91, in a phase marked by cooperation as much as conflict, and as part of a complex process of international agreement. The last Soviet troops left Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the first half of 1991.

13. What do the events of 1989–91 imply for the role of civil resistance in defense? The conclusions are not simple. If civil resistance is a form of defense, it is sometimes a very slow-acting one. Being local rather than intercontinental in its operation, working if at all by gradual osmosis rather than chain reaction, necessitating sometimes a long wait for the right moment to act, and relying on pressure, not destruction, it presents a striking contrast to the power represented by nuclear weapons.

Societies that have just been freed from long years of externally induced repression generally want to be defended, not liberated, in future: there are no signs that the countries emerging from the former Soviet empire want to put all their eggs in the basket of civil resistance. Further, they may well justify the maintenance of armed forces to cope with certain rather specialized types of threat, including terrorist assault.

Those leaders who contributed to major change by civil resistance have not subsequently, since in power, proposed to rely on civil resistance against all threats. In 1991, President Havel carefully guarded the right of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic to join in any security alliance;<sup>62</sup> and he also reiterated his support for “our new

military doctrine based on the principle of sufficient capability to defend ourselves against potential threats, whichever direction they might come from."<sup>63</sup> The Lithuanian government went some, but only some, way toward general reliance on civil resistance in its resolution of February 28, 1991. However, in general, while some existing military mechanisms were thoroughly discredited, there was no turn towards complete reliance on civil resistance. On February 25, 1991, the foreign and defense ministers of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, meeting in Budapest, agreed that the military activities of this discredited alliance would cease on April 1, 1991. However, the new governments of the Warsaw Pact member states have not proposed wholesale unilateral military disarmament. They were, and remain, anxious to maintain a multilateral framework for security policy, especially in view of their obvious and legitimate anxieties about events in the immediate neighborhood of their countries.

14. Even if they do not turn to a complete reliance on this technique of struggle, those societies that have helped to liberate themselves by civil resistance will not forget the experience, and in future crises may have to re-enact some parts of it. The knowledge that they could do so may deter potential foreign attackers, including conservatives in the USSR. As Sir Michael Howard said in the 1990 Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture: "His [Gorbachev's] military advisers, whatever their professional reservations, must know that returning Soviet armies would not find a single friend to help them, either to reconquer these countries or to rule them afterwards."<sup>64</sup>

15. What are the implications of the effective use of civil resistance in eastern Europe for the future of western European defense arrangements, whether within NATO or some new framework? In important respects, NATO's past policies can be seen as vindicated. The alliance's fundamentally defensive posture, its consistent refusal to engage in aggressive roll-back, and its emphasis on détente as well as defense, did in the end help to provide some of the conditions for change in eastern Europe. On the other hand, those in NATO member-states who viewed the Soviet Union as a very successful military power, and who took the vast production of military hardware as a sign of strength, may have been guilty of underestimating the internal problems of the Soviet empire.

As to the future, the basis of much Western strategic thinking for 40 years—that in face of a militant and conventionally superior Soviet

Union the West had to place a substantial degree of reliance on the threat of possible first use of nuclear weapons—is obviously outdated: the Soviet conventional superiority on which it was based is diminishing, and indeed the whole basis of threat perception is altered. Western strategic thinking is having to change in many different ways and on many different levels: in so doing it ought to take some account of the experiences of 1989–91. The process of rethinking could lead to some increased awareness of civil resistance, at least as a special option for special circumstances.

16. For too long, too many in the international community have seen armed liberation movements as the principal or only means by which entrenched and armed adversaries can be effectively countered. In their different ways, Presidents Brezhnev and Reagan appeared to subscribe to some such view, as did countless UN resolutions. Had there been armed national liberation movements in eastern Europe, pursuing what they saw as a just cause by violent means, who can say what kind of disaster might not have ensued? After the events of 1989–91, which produced vast historical change with astonishingly little bloodshed, the international community needs to devote more attention to thinking about the means that are used in conflicts, and can no longer assume that violent means are necessarily and in all cases the only ones.

17. Is there a natural connection between civil resistance on the one hand, and liberal democracy on the other? The events of 1989–91 powerfully reinforce the idea that the technique of civil resistance—which puts a premium on tolerance, persuasion, and the forging of coalitions—does tend to be used more in support of the goal of constitutional multiparty democracy than in other more dictatorial causes, and is compatible with achieving such a goal. Without doubt there will be great problems in introducing (or re-introducing) multiparty systems into societies with little experience of such systems, or that are deeply divided along ethnic, regional, or class lines. Yet the lesson of 1989–91 is clear: that democracy may be obtained and defended as much by civil resistance as by other means.



## NOTES

1. The term "eastern Europe" will be used here as crude shorthand to refer to all the formerly communist countries in central and eastern Europe except for those which were within the Soviet Union, in preference to the more cumbersome "East-Central Europe" and its variants. Such shorthand terms can of course be misleading: for many purposes the Soviet Union and its parts are themselves "eastern European."

2. Interviewed in *People Weekly*, New York, 27 November 1989, p. 49.

3. Timothy Garton Ash, *We The People: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin & Prague*, Granta Books, Cambridge, in association with Penguin Books, 1990, pp. 155–56.

4. Steven Lukes, "Marxism and Morality: Reflections of the Revolutions of 1989," *Ethics & International Affairs*, New York, 1990, vol. 4, p. 19.

5. The classic exposition is Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973). Based on the author's 1968 Oxford D.Phil. thesis, it began as a study of nonviolent resistance against totalitarian regimes.

6. For a useful account, see Roberto Eisenmann, "The Struggle Against Noriega," *Journal of Democracy*, Washington DC, Winter 1990, pp. 41–46. This was written shortly before the U.S. military intervention in Panama.

7. *Warsaw Treaty: New Initiatives. Documents of the Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organization*, Budapest, June 10–11, 1986, Novosti, Moscow, 1986, p. 25.

8. Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, 2d ed., Fontana/Collins, London, 1988, p. 138.

9. Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, p. 170.

10. Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, p. 195.

11. See BBC *Summary of World Broadcasts: Eastern Europe*, 11 April 1987.

12. Zbigniew Brzezinski's account of the Soviet position, in *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, Collier Books, New York, 1990, p. 93.

13. BBC, *Summary of World Broadcasts: Soviet Union*, 11 July 1989.

14. Janusz Onyskiewicz, Deputy Minister of Defense, speaking at a meeting in the Polish Embassy in London, September 3, 1990.

15. Timothy Garton Ash in *The Independent*, London, 2 February 1990. In fact, the refrain of the Sinatra song was: "And more, much more than this, I did it my way." One couplet of the song goes:

Yes, there were times I'm sure you knew

When I bit off more than I could chew.

16. Report from Moscow, *International Herald Tribune*, London, 24 October 1989.

17. *Warsaw Treaty: New Initiatives. Documents of the Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organization*, Budapest, June 10–11, 1986, Novosti, Moscow, 1986, p. 11.

18. Sergei A. Karaganov, "The Year of Europe: A Soviet View," *Survival*, London, March/April 1990, pp. 121 and 122. Karaganov does also say that in turn "the changes in the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Romania have provided a potent push for *perestroika*."

19. As reported by Imre Karacs in Moscow, *The Times*, London, 4 July 1990.

20. Ernst Kux, "Revolution in Eastern Europe—Revolution in the West?" *Problems of Communism*, Washington DC, May–June 1991, p. 3.

21. See for example Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *Dictatorship and Double Standards: Rationalism and Reason in Politics*, Simon and Schuster, New York, [1982]; and Caspar W. Weinberger, "Arms Reductions and Deterrence," *Foreign Affairs*, New York, Spring 1988.

22. Thus on November 26, 1989, Gorbachev published an article in *Pravda* defending the retention of single-party rule in the USSR.

23. Richard Davy, "The Strain on Moscow of Keeping a Grip on its European Empire," *The Times*, London, 18 December 1980.

24. William H. Luers, "The U.S. and Eastern Europe," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1987, pp. 977, 981, and 987.

25. Tony Judt, "The Rediscovery of Central Europe," *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Winter 1990, p. 50.

26. Charles Gati, "Gorbachev and Eastern Europe," *Foreign Affairs*, New York, Summer 1987, pp. 959–60. Note also his statement on p. 970 that "the Brezhnev doctrine is still on the books," and his pessimistic conclusion on p. 975.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 965–69.

28. This was by no means a new development in Poland. There is a brief acknowledgement of the development of the technique of strikes in Poland in the 1930s in George Schöpflin, "The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe," *Daedalus*, Winter 1990, p. 86. This is one of the very few references in this issue to eastern Europe's rich traditions of resistance.

29. For a summary of these developments, see *Keesing's Record of World Events*, p. 37010.

30. Mieczyslaw Rakowski interviewed by Geoffrey Stern, *LSE Magazine*, London School of Economics and Political Science, Summer 1991, p. 14. In this interview Rakowski gives an interesting account of the Soviet Union's willingness to accept in 1989 Polish outcomes which it would have viewed as anathema in 1981.

31. For a strong statement that the December 13, 1981 imposition of martial law was motivated by a desire "to do all possible to prevent intervention from the Soviet Union," see Mieczyslaw Rakowski's interview in *LSE Magazine*, Summer 1991, p. 14.

32. "Pozitivni tlak reformy v Madarsku," *Rudé Právo*, Prague, 18 April 1969, p. 7. Translation from CTK, *Daily Press Survey* (duplicated), Prague, 18 April 1969, p. 7. The editor of *Rudé Právo*, J. Sekera, was dismissed on the same day. Information given to the author in Prague on the same day by a senior

member of the paper's staff.

33. Answers to questions at the National Press Club, Washington DC, 26 July 1988, reported in *New York Times*, 28 July 1988, p. A5. Grosz qualified this remark by adding that the one-party system was a historical fact, and that broadening the range of parties "is not one of the first priorities."

34. *The Times*, London, 14 November 1988.

35. *Keesing's Record of World Events* 1989, p. 36399.

36. Cited in Garton Ash, *We The People*, p. 51.

37. The full text of this secret protocol between Hungary and East Germany dated June 20, 1969—including the clause providing that "this Protocol shall not be published"—was in fact, surprisingly, published in *United Nations Treaty Series*, vol. 986, New York, 1983, p. 46. (It was later reprinted in *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 84, no. 1, January 1990, p. 281.) I understand from Hungarian sources that it was the Hungarian foreign ministry which passed this document on to the United Nations for publication in the Treaty Series.

On September 10, 1989 the Hungarian government announced the suspension of this agreement with effect from September 11.—*Keesing's Record of World Events*, p. 36894.

38. Garton Ash, *We The People*, pp. 67 and 68.

39. In Halle, according to "church sources" cited in a report from Berlin in *International Herald Tribune*, London, 24 October 1989.

40. One of the tragicomic figures of the German events was the gentleman who left East Berlin early in November 1989, by the transit camp in the West German Embassy in Prague, on through Hungary and Austria to West Germany, from where he flew to West Berlin, just in time to see the Wall opened up. He must have felt that had he only waited, he could have made his few miles' journey on foot, and much more easily. Yet in a larger sense the emigration movement was a necessary prelude to the momentous changes in party leadership and in policy.

41. Josef Svorecky, "Bohemia of the Soul," *Daedalus*, Winter 1990, p. 117.

42. Vladimir Kusin, *From Dubcek to Charter 77: Czechoslovakia 1968–1978*, Q Press, Edinburgh, 1978, pp. 304–5. See also Václav Havel *et al.*, *The Power of the Powerless*, Hutchinson, London, 1985, pp. 69–78 and 217–21.

43. Concluding Document of the Vienna Meeting 1986 of Representatives of the Participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, issued in Vienna, 17 January 1989.

44. Richard Davy, "Restarting the Prague Clock," *The Spectator*, London, 6 February 1988, p. 12. Davy himself said in this article (p. 13): "Ordinary people are not going to put their heads above the parapet without a lot more reassurance . . ."

45. Report from Rome in *The Times*, London, 14 November 1988.

46. See especially the report from Prague by Edward Lucas, "Czech Revolt may be Result of KGB Plot," *The Independent*, London, 15 May 1990.

47. See e.g. Dessa Trevisan, "Up to 2,000 feared killed in Romania," *The*

*Times*, London, 20 December 1989, p. 1. Later estimates of the numbers killed at Timisoara were a great deal lower.

48. See e.g. Michael Evans, Defense Correspondent, "Troops Quick to Isolate Unrest," *The Times*, London, 20 December 1989.

49. This account is drawn in part from the very full accounts by a participating student, Viorica Butnariu, published in *The Observer*, London, 31 December 1989; and Robert Cullen, "Report from Romania: Down with the Tyrant," *The New Yorker*, 2 April 1990, pp. 94–112.

50. A full account of the *Adevarul* article of August 23, 1990 appeared in a Reuter report in *The Independent*, London, 24 August 1990.

51. Rein Taagepera, "Estonia's Road to Independence," *Problems of Communism*, Washington DC, November–December 1989, p. 21.

52. Text from Rein Taagepera, "Estonia's Road to Independence," pp. 22–23.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 23–25.

54. Report in *The Times*, London, 17 November 1989, p. 11.

55. Francis X. Clines, "Gorbachev Warns Estonia on Moves for Independence," *New York Times*, 5 April 1990, p. A1, col. 6.

56. On April 4, 1989, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker cautioned his Soviet counterpart Eduard Shevardnadze that a crackdown in Lithuania could wipe out much of the progress made in Soviet-American relations in the last year. Report by Thomas L. Friedman in *New York Times*, 5 April 1990, p. A16.

57. Translation from Lithuanian Information Center in New York, and published in *Civilian-Based Defense: News & Opinion*, Cambridge, MA, vol. 7, no. 3, May/July 1991, p. 4. See also Bruce Jenkins, "Einstein Institution Delegation Discusses Civilian-Based Defense with Lithuanian Officials," on pp. 2–3 of the same issue.

58. Quotations from Robert Andrews, *The Routledge Dictionary of Quotations*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1987, pp. 81–82. For a longer and more academic treatment of the same theme, see J.B. Duroselle, *Tout Empire Périra: Une Vision Théorique des Relations Internationales*, Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris, 1981.

59. Text in *NATO Review*, Brussels, April 1991, p. 31.

60. Jacob Burckhardt, *Über das Studium der Geschichte*, ed. Peter Ganz, Beck, Munich, 1984, p. 350. Based on lectures delivered between 1868 and 1873, and cited in Kux, "Revolution in Eastern Europe—Revolution in the West?" *Problems of Communism*, May–June 1991, p. 2.

61. Robert Cullen, "Report from Romania: Down with the Tyrant," *The New Yorker*, 2 April 1990, p. 108.

62. President Václav Havel, remarks in Prague on April 29, 1991, responding to a Soviet proposal to include in a bilateral treaty a clause stating that neither side will enter into a security alliance that could be directed against the other side. *The Independent*, London, 30 April 1991.

63. President Havel's address to the NATO Council on March 21, 1991,

*NATO Review*, April 1991, p. 33. See also his address on February 21, 1990 to a joint session of the U.S. Congress, in which he had said: "If Czechoslovakia were forced to defend itself against anyone, which we hope will not happen, then it will be capable of doing so with a considerably smaller army, because this time its defence would be . . . supported by the common and indivisible will of both its nations and its leadership. Our freedom, independence and our new-born democracy have been purchased at great cost, and we will not surrender them."—Typewritten transcript, p. 47.

64. Michael Howard, "The Remaking of Europe," prepared text for the Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture, delivered in London on March 12, 1990, *Survival*, London, March/April 1990, pp. 101–2.

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